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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 005510

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SUBJECT: DEPUTY SECRETARY'S JULY 10, 2005 MEETING WITH KING ABDULLAH

Classified By: Charge David Hale, Reasons 1.4 (B) & (D)

[1](#)1. (U) Deputy Secretary's meeting with King Abdullah on July 10, 2005, 11:30 a.m., Amman, Jordan.

[1](#)2. (U) Participants:

U.S.

Deputy Secretary Zoellick

Mr. Natsios, AID Administrator

Ms. O'Sullivan, NSC

Mr. Ross Wilson, D Executive Assistant

Charge (notetaker)

Jordan

King Abdullah II

Foreign Minister Qasrawi

Mr. Abdullah Woreikat, Royal Court Policy Coordination

Director

Ms. Rania Atallah, Royal Palace Communications Director

[1](#)3. (C) Summary. The Deputy Secretary and the King reviewed the outcome of the Islamic Conference recently held in Amman; the King plans to build on that initiative with a possible conference focused on Iraqi Sunni/Shia reconciliation, and with outreach to western Muslim communities during his September travels. The King reiterated his offer to train Palestinian security forces and pledged to push parliament to pass an anti-money laundering bill and ratify the Article 98 agreement this summer. End summary.

[1](#)4. (C) The Deputy Secretary praised Jordan's success in hosting an Islamic Conference the previous week. The King said it was the first time representatives of all the major sects came together to establish the parameters of the faith, thus isolating extremist takfiri groups as apart from Islam. He was particularly pleased that the group reiterated the methodology of issuing fatwas, which come properly from institutions operating with checks and balances. This step will make clear that fatwas issued by unqualified individuals, such as Zargawi, are illegitimate. He hoped the quickest impact would be seen in Iraq, where Ayatollah Sistani's full support for this initiative could bring dividends in ending the violence. The King said he was exploring ideas on next steps, possibly to include a conference of Iraqi Sunni and Shia leaders, both secular and religious, to denounce violence between Muslims and to build on the fatwa issued at last week's conference. As this was still at an embryonic stage, the King asked for confidentiality. He thought the impact of such a conference

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could be immediate among the Shia, given their comparatively strong and disciplined hierarchy. A trickier part was identifying Sunni figures who could command authority. If Sunni/Shia tension could be stabilized in Iraq, this same mechanism could be used in Bahrain, Pakistan, and elsewhere. The fact that clerics from Qum, Najaf, and Saudi Arabia joined together in this effort made a powerful mechanism, which could now be built on. The political leaderships in Tehran and Riyadh may now feel a bit cornered by this initiative. Another step ahead was to build support within the OIC, to win endorsement at the next summit in Jeddah.

[1](#)5. (C) The Deputy Secretary applauded the King's efforts. He encouraged Jordan to work with Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, whose "Islam Hedari" initiative had some important parallels to the King's efforts. He also appreciated the King's effort to use the conference results to reinforce condemnation of the London bombings. The King said there was strong British and American Muslim representation at the Amman meeting, and he would work with those communities to spread the message of the conference. He had delayed doing so until the success of the Islamic Conference, but his September trip to the U.S. offered several opportunities for work within Muslim communities and with Christian and Jewish leaders. He planned to address Catholic University on the themes of the Islamic conference and of interfaith coexistence. The King pointed in particular to the conference's reiteration of the Islamic tradition that Muslims living in non-Muslim states have a responsibility to obey the laws of those societies so long as Muslims there were given security and freedom of worship.

[1](#)6. (C) The Deputy Secretary thanked Jordan for hosting the

July 18-19 meeting of the International Reconstruction Trust Fund Facility for Iraq (IRRFI) and for Jordan's offer to provide security training to Palestinian forces. The King renewed the offer but said that Sharon's refusal to allow even basic equipment and vehicles) not weapons - to Palestinian security units was problematic. When asked for his assessment, the King said Lebanon seemed to be making strides and Syrian officials were beginning to feel the pressure. However, they were offering just those concessions they judged sufficient to remove that pressure. No determination to change policy had been made, and their efforts to control terrorist border infiltrations remained inadequate.

17. (C) The King thanked the Deputy Secretary for U.S. efforts to assist Jordan, both directly and by encouraging others to help. He noted that Bahrain's King Hamad called him over the weekend to say he had asked the Saudis to provide half of Bahrain's own Saudi oil assistance grant to Jordan. In a brief discussion of Jordan's request for debt swaps, the Deputy Secretary suggested continued discussion was needed including in political channels. Jordan's determination to correct its fiscal situation) evident in the July 8 announcement of a graduated end to oil subsidies) would help in making the case for support. In response to the Deputy Secretary's request, the King and Foreign Minister pledged the government would seek passage of an anti-money laundering bill and ratification of the Article 98 agreement during this summer's extraordinary parliamentary session. The King also pledged continued focus on the full range of reforms, including regionalization.

18. (U) D staff cleared this message. Department please repeat as appropriate.
HALE